United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

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DH/723
12 September 1990

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General addresses General Assembly's resumed session on apartheid stating that essential measures stipulated by Assembly in Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa remain to be fulfilled in their entirety.

+ Secretary-General appoints Sadruddin Aga Khan as Personal Representative for Humanitarian Assistance relating to Iraq-Kuwait crisis, in particular the problems of third-country nationals.

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The General Assembly today began its three-day session devoted to policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa.

In an opening address to the Assembly, Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar said that in his report of 20 July this year, on the progress made in the implementation of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, he had said he would continue to follow the situation closely and inform the Assembly of any major developments that took place.

He had reported that a process towards the dismantlement of apartheid through negotiations had started, he said, although it was still at an early stage. In that regard, he said, the action taken by the South African Government to lift the ban on political parties and movements was of particular significance.

However, while welcoming these developments, the Secretary-General said that he had made clear that other essential measures stipulated by the General Assembly in its Declaration remained to be fulfilled in their entirety. Those included the release of all political prisoners and detainees, the end of the state of emergency throughout the country, the repeal of all legislation designed to circumscribe political activity, the removal of all troops from the townships and the cessation of all political trials and political executions.

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Almost two months had elapsed since the introduction of his report, and he regretted that it was not possible for him today to inform the Assembly that the above-mentioned measures had been implemented in their totality, although some further steps had been taken in that direction.

Among such steps, the Secretary-General welcomed the Joint Declaration adopted in Pretoria on 6 August by the Government and the African National Congress (ANC), which had reflected "determination and clarity of vision, particularly as it was concluded at a time of great national turmoil". Under the terms of that Declaration, a plan would be drawn up for the release of ANC-related prisoners as well as the granting of indemnity to groups of persons in a phased manner. And the Government had committed itself to undertake consideration of the lifting of the state of emergency in Natal as early as possible, the Secretary-General said, adding that it was his hope that urgent consideration would also be given to the Transvaal province where emergency regulations were recently imposed.

The Secretary-General also expressed hope for an early repeal of the basic legislative structures of apartheid, two of which the Government announced it was planning to repeal early next year. He pointed out that the present violence was widely seen to be rooted in the structures of apartheid: the homeland policy and the migrant labour system.

The Secretary-General emphasized that the Assembly, in adopting at this session the Programme of Action in the Declaration, had decided, among other things, to step up all round support for apartheid opponents, to fully observe the mandatory arms embargo and to ensure that the international community did not relax existing measures to eradicate apartheid until there was clear evidence of profound and irreversible changes. He reported that, with very few exceptions, States Members had adhered to that Programme of Action.

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His Spokesman today announced the Secretary-General's appointment of Sadruddin Aga Khan as his Personal Representative for Humanitarian Assistance relating to the crisis between Iraq and Kuwait, in particular the problems of third-country nationals. He said that that decision had been taken, given the multifaceted nature and magnitude of the challenge and the need to contain human suffering as far as possible. Sadruddin Aga Khan would follow the entire issue personally on behalf of the Secretary-General, he said.

Since the commencement of the crisis, the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO), together with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and a number of non-governmental organizations, have worked together to deal with the situation along the borders of the countries neighbouring Iraq and

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Kuwait. The arrangements that are in place will continue and the efforts intensified.

In assuming the additional responsibilities assigned to him today, Sadruddin Aga Khan will continue to serve as Co-ordinator for the United Nations Humanitarian and Economic Assistance relating to Afghanistan.

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13 September 1990

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General "deeply concerned" that intense fighting in Monrovia prevents resumption of United Nations relief operations in Liberia.

+ Fifth round of direct talks between Government of El Salvador and Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) begins in San Jose, Costa Rica, with participation of Secretary-General's Representative, Alvaro de Soto.

+ New Permanent Representative of United Kingdom to the United Nations, David Hannay, presents credentials to Secretary-General.

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In a statement today, the Spokesman for Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar said the Secretary-General had expressed his deep concern that the intensity of fighting in Monrovia continued to make it impossible for the United Nations to resume its much needed relief operations in Liberia. The Secretary-General had renewed his fervent appeal to the warring factions to respect the human rights of the population, halt the senseless slaughter, negotiate their differences peacefully, and allow safe passage for desperately required humanitarian assistance.

The United Nations Special Co-ordinator for Emergency Relief Operations in Liberia, Michael Heyn, had undertaken a mission to Monrovia last weekend to assess the humanitarian situation, and advise on the feasibility of re-establishing a United Nations presence in the capital. Unfortunately, he said, Mr. Heyn's arrival on 8 September coincided with a marked escalation in the fighting, making it impossible for him to carry out his mission. He was unable to visit any part of the city, and was compelled to leave the country yesterday afternoon.

The United Nations will make further efforts to resume relief operations in the country as soon as conditions improve. It will also explore other

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avenues by which assistance to the affected civilian population within Liberia can be made available. Meanwhile, he said, emergency relief assistance to more than 500,000 Liberian refugees in neighbouring countries will continue.

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It was announced at Headquarters that direct talks between the Government of El Salvador and FMLN had begun today in San Jose, Costa Rica, with the participation of Alvaro de Soto, the Secretary-General's Representative for the peace process in Central America, in accordance with the agreement signed at Geneva on 4 April. This, the fifth round of talks, is expected to last until 18 September.

The agenda for the talks was agreed on at Caracas in May, and includes the armed forces, human rights, the electoral system, the judicial system, constitutional reforms, economic and social questions and verification by the United Nations.

Talks so far, the announcement States, have been principally on the armed forces but have not yielded agreement to date on that issue. An agreement on human rights was signed on 26 July. Preparations are currently under way for monitoring responsibilities, which are to be entrusted to the United Nations in due course.

A target date for the initial goal of the negotiations -- political agreements of the aforementioned issues in order to secure a cease fire, has been set for mid-September. At the end of the talks of the previous round, Mr. de Soto stated that it was unlikely that that target would be met.

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The new Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations, Sir David Hannay, has presented his credentials to the Secretary-General

Prior to his present appointment, Sir David was, since October 1985, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the European Economic Community (EEC) in Brussels. From June 1984 until October 1985 he was posted to Washington, D.C. as Minister.

Between 1977 and 1984, Sir David held various posts in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, including Head of the Energy, Science and Space Department, Head of the Middle East Department and Assistant Under-Secretary of State for European Community matters.

He was posted to the British delegation to the European Community, in Brussels, from 1965 to 1972. In 1970, he was a member of the United Kingdom negotiating team for entry into the EEC.

Born in London in 1935, Sir David was educated at Winchester and New College, Oxford, where he gained a First in Modern History in 1959.

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14 September 1990

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council asks Secretary-General to seek information on food availability in Iraq and Kuwait.

+ Sanctions Committee appeals for emergency international relief effort to assist in evacuation of foreign nationals stranded in Kuwait and Iraq.

+ Speakers in General Assembly's resumed session call for dismantling of legislation viewed as "pillars of apartheid".

+ Eleven countries pledge $21.9 million to Kampuchean Humanitarian Assistance Programmes.

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The Security Council, at a meeting last night which continued into the early morning hours of today, requested that the Secretary-General urgently seek information from the relevant United Nations and other humanitarian agencies on the availability of food in Iraq and Kuwait, and inform the Council's Sanctions Committee of his findings.

In taking that action by adopting resolution 666 by a vote of 13 in favour to 2 against (Cuba, Yemen), the Council also requested that particular attention be paid to the needs of children under 15 years of age, expectant mothers, maternity cases, the sick and the elderly.

The Sanctions Committee is called upon to report promptly to the Council should it determine that there is an urgent humanitarian need to supply foodstuffs in order to relieve suffering in Iraq or Kuwait, and to recommend ways for meeting that need. Such ways should be considered bearing in mind that foodstuffs should be provided through the United Nations in co-operation with appropriate humanitarian agencies and distributed by them or under their supervision.

In addition, the Council by its resolution states that it expects Iraq to comply with its obligations under resolution 664 in respect of third State

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nationals, and reaffirms that Iraq remains fully responsible for their safety and well-being.

In explaining his vote, Thomas Pickering, of the United States, said the behaviour of the Government of Iraq had caused the Council to make a difficult decision. Today's crisis had been caused by Iraq's decision "to widen the scope of its perfidy" by a deliberate policy of starving over 100,000 citizens of India, Sri Lanka and the Philippines.

The action of the Council stood in stark contrast to Iraq's policies, he said. The Council had adopted in resolution 666 a fair procedure that, if not rejected by Iraq, would allow for food and medical supplies essential to the well-being of civilians.

Li Daoyu of China said no situation should occur in which the Iraqi and Kuwaiti residents and foreign nationals in those countries, particularly children, would suffer hunger. He pointed out that the mechanisms of information seeking and food distribution provided for in the resolution should in no circumstances cause any impediment or delay for the delivery of food.

Pierre Louis Blanc of France said the Government of Iraq continued to refuse to abide by the resolution adopted by the Council and now the situation of nationals of third countries was alarming. The solution of the problem required the evacuation of all persons concerned, as resolution 664 had stated. He called on Iraq to respect that resolution.

Sir David Hannay of the United Kingdom said that on each of the six votes on the situation the Council had acted following Iraq's defiance of international law. Third country nationals were being singled out and used as pawns by Iraq. Its objectives were to seek a breach in the sanctions. The Council's resolution sought to avoid such an occurrence. The guidelines provided by the resolution would allow food to be brought without delay to the Indians and other nationals who were suffering.

Yuliy Vorontsov of the Soviet Union said Iraq must unconditionally withdraw from Kuwait. His Government had voted for all the resolutions, because "one cannot throw out the principles and norms of international law".

The economic sanctions, he went on, were not aimed at causing hunger and disease in the civilian populations. The recent joint communique from Helsinki had recognized the need for allowing basic foodstuffs for humanitarian needs, as provided by resolution 661.

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The Sanctions Committee, established by the Council to monitor the trade embargo imposed against Iraq by resolution 661, met for the tenth time yesterday to consider the situation concerning hundreds of thousands of Asian and other foreign nationals stranded in Iraq and Kuwait.

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In a statement on behalf of its members, Marjatta Rasi of Finland said the Committee had recognized the exceptionally difficult conditions affecting the foreign nationals and appealed for an emergency international relief effort to assist in their evacuation from Kuwait and Iraq. In this regard, the Committee had requested the Secretary-General to consider all possible ways for the United Nations to assist in this effort.

Any specific proposals concerning the provision of foodstuffs and other relief assistance to third state nationals would be given due and speedy consideration by the Committee, she said. In this regard, the Committee had authorized one Indian ship carrying foodstuffs to be sent to meet the immediate needs of Indian nationals in Kuwait and Iraq. Ms. Rasi added that the distribution of the foodstuffs should be carried out as provided for in the relevant Security Council resolutions.

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South Africa should fulfil completely the conditions set out in the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, in order to create an atmosphere conducive to negotiations. It should also move to dismantle the existing legislation considered to be the "pillars" of apartheid.

That was the view expressed by a number of speakers this morning as the General Assembly continued its consideration of the apartheid policies of the South African Government.

In particular, the Assembly has been considering developments in South Africa since the Assembly adopted its consensus Declaration at its special session last December.

When the Assembly meets next at 10 a.m. on Monday, 17 September, it is expected to take action on a draft text on the apartheid question. It is also scheduled to consider a draft resolution on assistance to Haiti.

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